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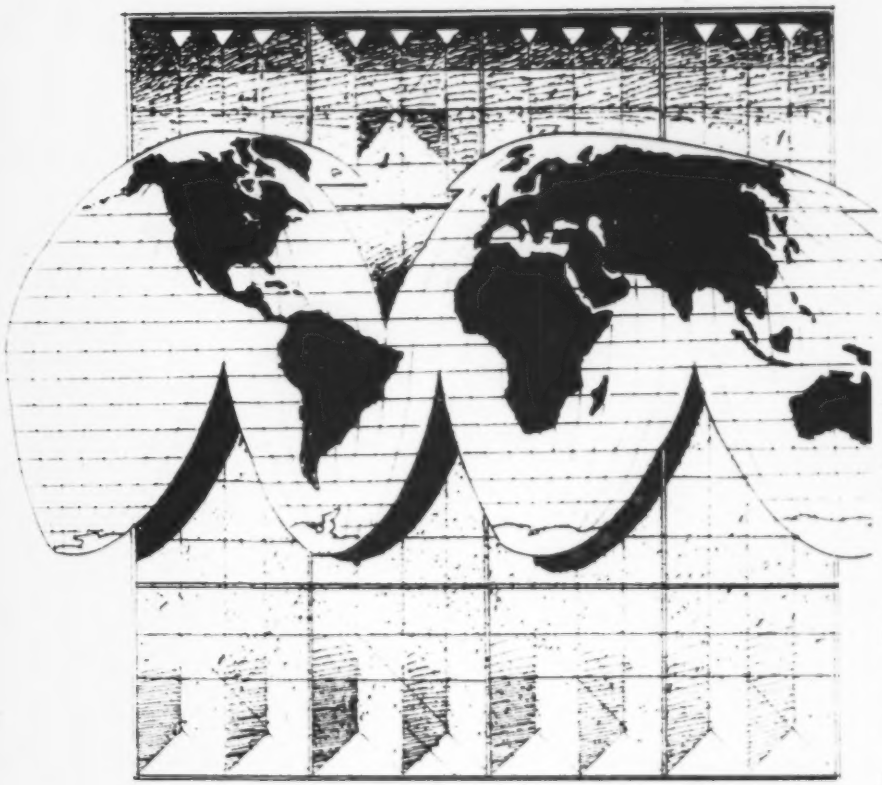
ABSTRACT

This document consists of a classroom lesson designed for upper elementary grades 5-8. It is based on the goals of the United Nations International Literacy Year (1990). The lesson covers 4 to 5 class days and can be used in language arts or social studies classes. The lesson includes a brief introduction to the United Nations, information on the U.N. International Literacy Year, and up-to-date statistics on world education and literacy. The student identifies the attributes of literacy and notes that attributes vary over time and culture. Students explore the linkage of literacy and personal power while gathering information about education and literacy in a culture or region of the student's choice. The lesson culminates in an independent literacy project applicable to each student's local environment. Given a choice of several formats, students design the independent literacy project and share it in some way with other learners. Included in the lesson materials are reproducible student handouts, and lesson specific resources as well as general resources. Seven handouts are provided and include: (1) state of the world's children; (2) international literacy year; (3) country specific worksheet; (4) Rose Barstow, a description by an Ojibwe elder of her experiences in a mission school; (5) a teacher resource consisting of question strategy for slavery and gender; (6) the independent literacy project; and (7) What is the United Nations? (DK)

The United Nations: A Right to Education and Literacy

Dorothy Hoffman and Mary Eileen Sorenson

ED 363 536



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Educating for Peace Project

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The United Nations:
The Right to Education and Literacy

Dorothy Hoffman

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Introduction

Welcome to our classroom lesson, *The United Nations: The Right to Education and Literacy.* This lesson is designed for upper elementary (grades 5-8) and is based on the goals of the United Nations International Literacy Year (1990). It covers 4-5 class days and can be used in Language Arts and Social Studies classes.

The lesson includes a brief introduction to the **United Nations**, information on the **UN International Literacy Year**, and up-to-date **statistics** on world education and literacy. The student explores the attributes of literacy in a variety of cultures, the linkage of literacy and personal power while gathering information in a culure/region of his/her choice. The lesson culminates in an **Independent Literacy Project** applicable to each student's local environment.

Included in the lesson materials are reproducible student **handouts**, and lesson specific **resources** as well as general resources.

As Curriculum Coordinator for this *Educating for Peace Project*, I would like to thank Dorothy Hoffman, Minnesota Social Studies educator, and Jim Muldoon and Jeff Brennan of UNA-USA for their time and effort in making this project possible.

Special thanks to the Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation and the Otto Bremer Foundation for providing grant money to produce this lesson.

Mary Eileen Sorenson
Curriculum Coordinator
Education for Peace Project

The United Nations:
A Right to Education and Literacy

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The United Nations:
The Right to Education and Literacy

"We cannot afford to build two nations within the same territorial boundaries--one rich, educated-- and the other, which constitutes the majority of the population, poor and illiterate."

Students of Makere University, Uganda, 1970

"There can be no human development without the right to learn. There will be no breakthroughs in agriculture and industry, no progess in community health and, indeed, no change in learning conditions without the right to learn. Without this right there will be no improvements in the standards of living for workers in cities and villages."

Fourth UNESCO International Conference on Adult Education, 1985

Objectives:

Through discussion students will identify the attributes of literacy and note that attributes vary over time and culture.
Students will explore the linkage between literacy and personal power.
Students will gather information about education and literacy in a country or culture of their choice.
Given a choice of several formats, students will design an independent "Literacy Project" and share it in some way with other learners.

Materials Needed:

Handout #1: State of the World's Children
Handout #2: International Literacy Year
Handout #3: Country Specific Worksheet
Handout #4: Rose Barstowe
Teacher Resource #5: Question Strategy for Slavery/Gender
Handout #6: Independent Literacy Project
Handout #7: What is the United Nations?

*Note to teachers: Yearly update of material found in Handout #1 of the lesson can be obtained by contacting **UNICEF** for their latest release of State of the World's Children as listed in Additional Resources.

Set Induction:

-"What does it mean to be educated? What does it mean to be literate? What constitutes literacy?" Attempt to generate a class definition through answers to these questions. Compare the class definition to that of UNESCO':

> **"To be literate is to be able to write and read in my master tongue or national language and to know enough mathematics for effective functioning in my community. I am capable of using these skills toward my own and my community's development."**

-How are the class definition and the UNESCO definition similar? Dissimilar? Why is the right to education/literacy classified as a right to development? What qualities of a person may not be fully developed if she or he is denied an education? What is a person who is educated/literate able to do that one who is not literate cannot do?

-An important part of the UNESCO definition states: "I am capable of using these skills toward my own and my **community's** development." Why might community development be included in this definition? (Reciprocity. If a community contributes to individual's development through provision of an education, it is **a responsibility that accompanies the contribution** to give back to that community and, through that giving, to insure that tomorrow's children will also be given the right to education.)

-"One definition of literacy is "to be educated". Is it possible to "be educated" without being able to read or write?" .In some cultures of the past and present, there are highly "educated" people who cannot read and write, either because a culture does not have a written language or because a person has a disability to absorb information through reading or writing but has gathered an immense quantity of information through other means. In many traditional societies, people called "griots" (historian-storytellers) carry in their minds the entire history of a culture. These people are certainly knowledgeable and capable of using these skills toward their own and their community's development.

There exist in the world today groups of people totally isolated from "literate" society. Some have no written language and have had little or no contact with cultures that do. It must be understood, however, that these people, too, are constantly engaged in the acquisition of knowledge, the acquisition of "literacy" valuable to their particular culture, and they use these skills and knowledge toward their own and their community's development. What constitutes "literacy" in a particular community is that knowledge and skill that is valued by the culture of that community. Had this "literacy" been acknowledged and accepted by early anthropologists and politicians/theorists in Europe in the age of colonialism, rather than had its misinterpretation been used as a rationale for domination, much damage might have been spared many cultures of the world.

-"In what cultures, then, would lack of ability to read and write constitute the greatest deficiency? " (In a culture where such ability is commonplace, considered necessary, and highly valued.)
"Considering life in the United States:

- What practical, everyday, tasks would be difficult for someone who could not read or write?
- What jobs would likely **not** be available to someone who could not read or write?
- What jobs **would be** available to someone who could not read or write?
- What pleasures would be denied someone who could not read or write?

Learning Sequence:

-Because of the importance of this right to development, the United Nations declared 1990 **International Literacy Year**. What do you think the U.N. might want to accomplish by declaring a year as such? (Students may need some information on the United Nations. See **Handout #7**)

-One of the **goals** of the International Literacy Year was **to launch a worldwide effort to secure a common basic level of primary education in every country for at least 80 per cent of all 14**

year olds by the year 2000. In your opinion, how ambitious a goal is this? What are your predictions as to what percentage of the world's countries have attained this level? Record predictions and perhaps have one student obtain actual percentage from reviewing education data from **State of the World's Children (Handout #1).** Have him/her share this information. Have each student select a country from the handout and study the educational data for that country. Have students report on findings from their country of study.

-Relative to the Right to Education and Literacy, you will be asked to carry out **four** tasks:

1. Review information on **International Literacy Year** (See **Handout #2**).
2. Gather information about education and literacy in the country/culture of your choice and prepare the Country Specific Worksheet for your country. **(See Handout #3)**
3. Participate in discussion related to the denial of education to particular groups of citizens in the history of the United States.
4. Design, implement, and share with the class, your own **Independent Literacy Project** that relates somehow to the power of knowledge or the power of literacy. You can, of course, "design, implement, and share with the class" a cooperative Independent Literacy Project", working with one or more of your classmates. More details later.

-The first (1) task is self explanatory. The second (2) we must discuss before you begin. In finding out about literacy/education in the country of your choice, what questions would you like to have answered? Hopefully, students will generate questions that include many of the following:

•What is the literacy rate?
•Is primary schooling mandatory and, if so, at what age will a child in my country of choice begin and to what age will s/he continue?

•Is schooling free? Are there extra costs for books, supplies, and uniforms? What percentage of the population can afford the cost?
•What does an "average" school look like and what facilities and equipment is it likely to have?
•Do boys and girls go to school together or separately? Do they receive the same number of years of schooling? Is the curriculum the same for boys and girls?
•What percentage of children actually attend school? Why do some children not attend? Are there specific groups that are excluded or whose rights are extended over those of others?
•What will determine whether s/he will be promoted from one grade/level to the next?
•How might s/he be disciplined, if it were deemed necessary?
•Is the education s/he is given appropriate to the culture in which s/he lives? **(See Handout #4: Rose Barstowe.)**
•Will there be educational opportunities beyond high school for him or her?
•For what careers/jobs will s/he be prepared when s/he has finished the compulsory education?
•What, in your opinion, is the greatest educational need in your country ? How likely is it that a child there will get the education s/he needs for a healthy life?

-Students will prepare their Country Specific Information Sheets. Share findings of country studies with the total class, discussing the questions listed above.

-The third (3) task: "Let us now switch our focus to literacy in the United States. Historically, for what reasons were individuals or groups of individuals denied an education in this country?" Poverty, gender or ethnic discrimination, child labor, war, sickness, disability, geographic or social isolation, etc.

*How could/did/doe's poverty interfere with the right to an education? What could be/were/are the consequences of this

interference?
*How could/did/does gender discrimination interfere with the right to an education? Consequences? (See **Teacher Resource#5: Question Strategy for Gender/Slavery**)
*How could/did/does ethnic discrimination interfere with the right to an education? Consequences? (See **Teacher Resource #5)**
*How could/did/does child labor? War? Sickness? Etc. Consequences?

(Stress that consequences all affect the "capability of using these skills toward my own and my community's development.")

-The fourth (4) task: Design, implement, and share with the class, your own **Independent Literacy Project (Handout #6)** that relates somehow to the power and freedom that are the gifts of knowledge and literacy.

-"You've probably heard the statement "Knowledge is power." What does this mean and can you think of situations that illustrate this statement? " Have students make statements: "Because I know/have the knowledge of _____, I have the **power** to _____." And: "Because I know/have the knowledge of _____, I have the **freedom** to _____."

-In your project, **you must use your own literacy to advance the cause of literacy with others**. The project should be designed to share with a particular audience. Let's think together of some possible projects.

-Interview an older person who was not able to learn as much as s/he would have liked to about how not knowing all they would like to has affected his/her life. What factors limited his/her education?

-Work together to create a story/poem/tale/song/mural/poster/ dance about the freedom and power of reading.

-Keeping in mind the rights to development, create a reading list for a child from your country for different periods of his/her life: picture books, primary, intermediate, adolescent and young adult. Share list with day-care and primary grade teachers/providers OR ask to read to children in their classes.

-Create a bookmobile to travel around the school; share the meaning of "literacy" and share lists of books that are free and give one power!

-Create a list of stories that tell of your chosen country. Share one story with your class and post list for others to see and read.

-Research the "oral tradition" , the passing on of knowledge, wisdom, history, cultural values (basically, literacy) from one generation to the next without the aid of a written language. Interview a storyteller who learned his/her art this way about the richness of this means of delivery. Learn and tell a story from the oral tradition to children or another select audience.

-Arrange a storytelling seminar of sorts that includes students of your class and grandparents. Share your favorite stories and favorite settings in which to hear them.

-There are undoubtedly children in your school who are having difficulty learning to read. Sometimes, lack of reading material at home makes it difficult. Is there a way to begin a book, magazine, comic book, recycling effort at your school? In what other ways could you help?

-There are many English-speaking developing countries in the Caribbean area that are in great need of books and other materials necessary to literacy. Perhaps an effort could be started to have district reading materials sent to schools in Jamaica, Trinidad, etc. rather than being destroyed when new materials are adopted

-Select your topic and complete **Handout #6: Independent Literacy Project.**

TABLE 4: EDUCATION

Handout #1

		Adult literacy rate		No. of radio/ television sets per 1 000 population	Primary-school enrolment ratio			% of grade 1 enrolment completing primary school	Secondary-school enrolment ratio
		1970 male/female	1985 male/female	1986/7	1960 (gross) male/female	1986–88 (gross) male/female	1986–88 (net) male/female	1985–1987	1986–1988 (gross) male/female
	Very high U5MR countries (over 170) Median	**25/8**	**43/22**	**61/4**	**29/12**	**69/43**	**50/32**	**40**	**18/6**
1	Afghanistan	13/2	39/8	102/8	15/2	27/14	. /. .	63	10/5
2	Mozambique	29/14	55/22	38/1	60/36	76/59	49/41	39	7/4
3	Mali	11/4	23/11	37/	14/6	29/17	23/14	39	9/4
4	Angola	16/7	49/33	49/5	/	/	/	. .	/
5	Sierra Leone	18/8	38/21	216/8	30/	68/48	/	. .	23/11
6	Malawi	42/18	52/31	197/	/45	73/59	50/47	33	5/3
7	Ethiopia	8/( )	/	193/2	11/3	46/28	32/22	41*	18/12
8	Guinea	21/7	40/17	33/2	44/16	41/18	31/15	70	13/4
9	Burkina Faso	13/3	21/6	24/5	12/5	41/24	34/20	74	8/4
10	Niger	6/2	19/9	62/3	7/3	37/20	/	75	/
11	Chad	20/2	40/11	237/1	29/4	73/29	52/23	17	10/2
12	Central African Rep.	26/6	53/29	60/2	53/12	82/51	59/39	17	17/6
13	Somalia	5/1	18*/6*	38/( )	13/13	/	19/10	33*	/
14	Mauritania	/	/	139/1	13/3	61/42	/	92	23/9
15	Rwanda	43/21	61/33	54/	/	69/66	65/63	49	7/5
16	Kampuchea	/23	85*/65*	106/8	/	/	/	50*	45/20
17	Yemen Dem.	31/9	59/25	154/21	20/5	96/35	/	40*	26/11
18	Nepal	23/3	39/12	31/1	19/1	104/47	76/35	28*	35/11
19	Bhutan	/	/	15/	5/	31/20	/		7/2
20	Yemen	9/1	42*/7*	34/8	14/	141/40	/	15*	46/6
21	Burundi	29/10	43*/26*	56/( )	27/9	68/50	46/37	87	6/3
22	Bangladesh	36/12	43/22	40/3	66/26	76/64	67/44	20	24/11
23	Benin	23/8	37/16	75/4	38/15	84/43	66/34	36	23/9
24	Madagascar	56/43	74/62	193/6	58/45	97/92	89/	30*	23/19
25	Sudan	28/6	33*/14*	229/52	35/14	59/41	/	61*	23/17
26	Tanzania	48/18	93*/88*	16/1	33/18	67/66	50/51	76	5/3
27	Namibia	/	/	123/11	/	/	/	. .	/ . .
28	Nigeria	35/14	54/31	163/6	46/27	/	97/85	63*	/
29	Bolivia	68/46	84/65	527/77	78/50	97/85	88/78		40/35
30	Haiti	26*/17*	40/35	41/4	50/42	83/72	45/42	15	19/17
	High U5MR countries (95–170) Median	**48/20**	**66/45**	**125/22**	**65/37**	**100/81**	. . /. .	**64**	**32/26**
31	Uganda	52/30	70/45	96/6	/32	76/63	43/38	76	16/9
32	Gabon	43/22	70/53	119/23	/	/	/	59	/
33	Pakistan	30/11	40/19	86/14	46/13	51/28	/	49*	26/11
34	Laos	37/28	92/76	123/2	34/16	102/85	/	14*	23/16
35	Togo	27/7	53/28	178/5	63/24	124/78	87/59	59	36/12
36	Cameroon	47/19	68/45	125/12	87/43	119/100	/	67	32/20
37	India	47/20	57/29	77/7	80/40	113/81	/	. .	50/27
38	Liberia	27/8	47/23	224/18	45/18	82/50	/	. .	/
39	Ghana	43/18	64/43	292/13	52/25	78/63	/	. .	49/32
40	Côte d'Ivoire	26/10	53/31	131/54	68/24	. /. .	/	68	26/12
41	Zaire	61/22	79/45	98/1	88/32	84/68	86/65	60	32/14
42	Senegal	18/5	37/19	103/32	36/0	71/49	59/41	83	19/10
43	Lesotho	49/74	62/84	68/1	63/102	102/127	/	52	18/26
44	Zambia	66/37	84/67	73/15	51/34	102/92	/	91	/
45	Egypt	50/20	59/30	310/83	80/52	100/79	/	64	79/58
46	Peru	81/60	91/78	241/84	95/71	125/120	/	51*	68/61
47	Morocco	34/10	45/22	206/56	67/27	85/56	68/46	69	43/30
48	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	60/13	81/50	221/63	92/24	/	/	82	/
49	Indonesia	66/42	83/65	145/40	86/58	120/115	99/97	80	/
50	Congo	50/19	71/55	120/3	103/53	/	/	75	/
51	Zimbabwe	63/47	81/67	85/22	/	130/126	100/100	74	49/42
52	Kenya	44/19	70/49	90/6	64/30	98/93	/	62	27/19
53	Honduras	55/50	61/58	376/67	68/67	104/108	/	43	/
54	Algeria	39/11	63/37	227/70	55/37	105/87	97/81	90	61/46
55	Guatemala	51/37	63/47	65/37	50/39	82/70	/	36	/
56	Saudi Arabia	15/2	71*/31*	272/268	22/	78/65	64/48	90	52/35
57	South Africa	/	/	319/97	94/85	/	/		/
58	Nicaragua	58/57	/	237/60	65/66	94/104	74/79	20	29/58
59	Myanmar	85/57	/	79/1	61/52	/	/	27*	/

Note: nations are listed in descending order of their 1988 under five mortality rates (see table 1)

		Adult literacy rate		No. of radio/ television sets per 1,000 population 1986/7	Primary-school enrolment ratio			% of grade 1 enrolment completing primary school 1985-1987	Secondary-school enrolment ratio 1986-1988 (gross) male/female
		1970 male/female	1985 male/female		1960 (gross) male/female	1986-88 (gross) male/female	1986-88 (net) male/female		
	Middle U5MR countries (31-94) Median	**75/65**	**86/77**	**226/82**	**95/85**	**105/104**	**90/89**	**76**	**56/55**
60	Iraq	50/18	90/87	199/64	94/36	105/91	91/82	71	60/38
61	Turkey	69/34	86*/62*	160/172	90/58	121/113	/.	85*	57/34
62	Botswana	37/44	73/69	130/7	35/48	111/117	85/93	89	31/33
63	Iran, Islamic Rep. of	40/17	62/39	236/53	56/27	122/105	98/89	83	57/39
64	Viet Nam	/.	88*/80	99/34	/.	107/94	/.	50*	44/41
65	Ecuador	75/68	85/80	292/81	87/79	118/116	/.	50*	55/57
66	Brazil	69/63	79/76	368/191	97/93	/.	/.	22	32/41
67	El Salvador	61/53	75/69	401/82	/.	77/81	61/62	31	27/30
68	Tunisia	44/17	68/41	171/68	88/43	126/107	100/89	77	46/34
69	Papua New Guinea	39/24	55/35	64/2	59/7	75/64	/.	67*	16/9
70	Dominican Rep.	69/65	78/77	164/79	99/98	99/103	80/78	35	/.
71	Philippines	84/81	86/85	135/36	98/93	105/107	94/94	75	66/66
72	Guyana	94/89	97/95	303/15	107/106	/.	/.	84	/.
73	Mexico	78/69	92/88	241/120	82/77	119/116	/.	71	54/53
74	Colombia	79/76	82*/82*	167/106	77/77	112/115	72/74	57	55/56
75	Syria	60/20	76/43	231/58	89/39	115/104	100/94	67*	69/48
76	Oman	/.	47*/12*	649/739	/.	103/92	83/77	89	46/29
77	Paraguay	85*/75*	91/85	165/24	105/90	104/99	86/84	50	30/30
78	Mongolia	87/74	95/90	128/31	79/78	100/103	/.		88/96
79	Jordan	64/29	87/63	237/69	94/59	98/99	88/88	96	80/78
80	Lebanon	79*/58*	86/69	772/302	105/99	105/95	/.		57/56
81	Thailand	86/72	94/88	174/103	88/79	/.	/.	64*	/.
82	Venezuela	79/71	88/85	395/142	100/100	107/107	/.	73	48/59
83	Sri Lanka	85/69	91/83	187/31	100/90	105/102	100/100	88	63/69
84	China	/.	82/56	184/17	/.	140/124	99/91	68*	50/37
85	Argentina	94/92	96/95	659/217	98/99	110/110	/.		69/78
86	Panama	81/81	89/88	220/163	98/94	109/104	90/89	82	56/63
87	Albania	/.	/.	167/83	102/86	100/99	/.		80/71
88	Korea Dem.	/.	/.	110/12	/.	/.	/.	99	/.
89	Korea Rep.	94/81	96*/88*	986/194	99/89	104/104	100/99	99	91/86
90	United Arab Emirates	24/7	/.	319/106	/.	98/100	88/89	82	55/66
91	Malaysia	71/48	81/66	436/140	108/83	102/102	/.	97	59/59
92	USSR	98/97	/.	685/314	100/100	/.	/.	80	/.
93	Uruguay	93*/93*	/.	594/173	111/111	111/109	/.	86	/.
	Low U5MR countries (30 and under) Median	**93/88**	**97/90**	**579/290**	**105/103**	**103/101**	**97/97**	**95**	**83/85**
94	Mauritius	77/59	89/77	263/188	103/93	105/107	93/95	96	53/50
95	Yugoslavia	92/76	97/86	344/175	113/108	95/94	/.	98	82/79
96	Romania	96/91	/.	288/166	101/95	/.	/.		79/80
97	Chile	90/88	97*/96*	335/163	111/107	103/101	/.	33*	72/76
98	Trinidad and Tobago	95/89	97/95	457/290	89/87	99/100	87/88	84	80/85
99	Kuwait	65/42	76/63	327/261	131/102	95/92	81/77	91	86/79
100	Jamaica	96/97	/.	400/108	92/93	104/106	/.		62/67
101	Costa Rica	88/87	94/93	258/79	97/95	100/97	85/85	81	40/43
102	Bulgaria	94/89	/.	357/189	94/92	105/103	/.	90	75/76
103	Hungary	98/98	/.	586/402	100/100	97/97	94/96	92	69/70
104	Poland	98/97	/.	289/263	110/107	101/101	99/99	94	78/82
105	Cuba	86/87	96*/96*	334/193	109/109	107/100	95/94	92	85/92
106	Greece	93/76	97/88	411/175	104/101	106/106	91/92	99	89/80
107	Portugal	78/65	89/80	212/159	132/129	131/123	/.		47/56
108	Czechoslovakia	/.	/.	577/281	93/93	95/96	/.	93	27/49
109	Israel	93/83	97/93	470/264	99/97	94/97	/.		79/87
110	USA	99/99	/.	2119/811	/.	101/100	97/97		98/99
111	Belgium	99/99	/.	465/320	111/108	99/100	82/83	77	99/100
112	Germany Dem.	/.	/.	663/754	111/113	107/105	92/91		79/76
113	Singapore	92/55	93/79	306/	121/113	118/113	100/100	95	70/73
114	New Zealand	/.	/.	923/369	110/106	107/106	100/100		84/86
115	Spain	93/87	97/92	295/368	106/116	113/113	98/98	96	97/107
116	Denmark	/.	/.	956/386	103/103	98/99	/.	99	106/107
117	United Kingdom	/.	/.	1145/434	92/92	105/106	97/97		82/85
118	Italy	95/93	98/96	786/	112/109	/.	97/98	99	/.
119	Australia	/.	/.	1270/483	103/103	106/105	97/98		96/99
120	Germany Fed.	/.	/.	954/385	/.	101/101	/.	95	96/92
121	Hong Kong	90*/64*	95/81	633/241	93/79	106/105	95/95	98	71/76
122	Austria	/.	/.	561/480	106/104	102/101	/.	95	78/81
123	Norway	/.	/.	790/348	100/100	95/95	97/97	99	92/97
124	France	99/98	/.	893/	144/143	114/113	100/100	95	89/96
125	Ireland	/.	/.	580/	107/112	100/100	/.		91/101
126	Netherlands	/.	/.	908/469	105/104	114/116	85/88	94	105/103
127	Canada	/.	/.	953/577	108/105	106/104	97/97		104/104
128	Japan	99/99	/.	863/587	103/102	102/102	100/100	99	95/97
129	Switzerland	/.	/.	834/405	118/118	/.	/.		/.
130	Sweden	/.	/.	875/39	95/96	/.	/.		90/92
131	Finland	/.	/.	991/	100/95	102/101	/.	98	98/114

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Handout #2

International Literacy Year: 1990

"Our concern for literacy is an expression of our hope and fears for the future and our realization that tomorrow will be shaped, in very large part, by the education which is being made available today."
Federico Mayor, Director-General of UNESCO

The Goal: The UN system of programs and agencies, with UNESCO is the lead, is rallying the support of Governments and the public for a global assault on illiteracy. **The program aims to secure a common basic level of primary education in every country for at least 80 per cent of all 14-year-olds by the year 2000.**

The Reality:

- 30% of children of primary school age in the developing countries are not attending school.
- One quarter of the young girls of primary school age in the developing countries are not attending school, whereas only one seventh of the boys are not.
- 60% of children of secondary school age in the developing countries are not attending school.
- One third of children enrolled in primary school in the developing countries drop out of school before completing four grades, the minimum number necessary for achieving basic literacy skills.
- Nearly two thirds of the illiterate adults in the developing countries are women.
- The number of "functional illiterate" in the developed countries is growing rapidly. The functionally illiterate are considered able to read and write at an elementary level, but lack the literacy skills needed to cope with the demands of complex living and working environments.

The consequences of illiteracy: "Illiteracy aggravates the problems of poverty, malnutrition, inadequate health care and runaway population growth which face many countries." For discussion: **In what ways will country's high rate of illiteracy affect the quality of life of its citizens, economically, politically, etc.?**

Handout #3
Country Specific Worksheet
Name: _____ Date: _____

Literacy in my Country

Country name: _____ Population: _____
Literacy rate for males: _____ Literacy rate for females: _____
Discrepancy between literacy rates for males and females: _____

Describe **primary** schooling: At what age does it begin? Is it free? Do children wear uniforms and if they do who pays for them? For how many months of the year? Do boys and girls attend the same schools and the same classes? How do children get to school? What percentage of children of primary school age actually attend school? For what reasons do they not attend? _____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Describe the **school** itself: What does the structure look like? How big is it? How many children per class? With what is the classroom equipped? Where do children eat lunch and play?_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Describe **secondary** (equivalent to junior and senior high school in the U. S.) schooling: At what ages does it begin and end? What percentage of boys and what percentage of girls are enrolled in secondary education? Is it free? How do the students get to school? Is the

curriculum the same for boys and girls? How is it determined which students will "pass" on to the next level? What choices do children and adolescents have who do not go on to secondary education? _____

Read **Handout #4: (Rose Barstowe)** and answer questions. With the content of this story in mind, is the education a child in your country will receive **appropriate to his/her history and culture**? Why is it or why is it not? _____

Will there be **educational opportunities beyond high school** for him or her? For what **careers/jobs** will s/he be prepared when s/he has finished secondary education?_____

What, in your opinion, is the **greatest edcuational need** in his/her country? How likely is it that this child will get the education she or he needs to lead a healthy and happy life? _____

Handout #4
Rose Barstowe
Ojibwe elder

"At the Mission School"

The first year was kind of tough because I didn't speak the language. You see, when I first came to the school and was watching what was going on, a student made a mistake when she answered. I looked around me and saw that the other kids were laughing, and I looked at the teacher and she was laughing too. I could hardly believe my eyes. We were taught never to laugh at someone who made a mistake, even the second or third time someone made a mistake. And when I saw this, I zipped up my mouth and said, "They won't hear me talk 'til I learn this language."

So the first year I was there I was really a dummy. They put dunce caps on me and sat me in front of the class. I used to make faces at the kids and stuff like that. I didn't even care.

It was the second year then, around Halloween, when I first spoke up. We were making black cats, and witches, and faces on pumpkins and things like that. We happened to have a numbers class that day. I used to look out this window and there was this squirrel that must have been making a winter home in the stump because he was carrying acorns down into it, a big red squirrel. They're good to eat, too, you know. My grandfather taught me how to cook them.

Anyway, I could hear the teacher saying, "If I had four apples and I gave you one, how many would I have left?" Without thinking, I raised my hand and I heard this voice saying, "Shame on you, Sister! That's not very nice! You'd have three apples left and I'd only have one! If you are my friend, that's not very nice."

I heard this voice and I looked round and everyone was looking at me and I looked at the Sister and her mouth was open. She had these apples in her hand, three on one side and one on the other, and I thought, "Oh oh! Now I've done it!"

She said, "Rosemary, you spoke!"

Of course, after that, I was quickly passed to higher grades. Toward spring of that year, I had heard that in the fourth grade we got to read history. Well, I didn't know what history was but I got the first phases of it out of a book I got out of the library. I was way ahead of myself. And I happened to be on the French Indian wars. There was a picture in there of these Mohawk Indians, you know the ones with the hair in the middle here and some kind of headdress, you know. They were in this big room, a big meeting room. There was a woman sitting with a baby at her breast. One Indian came from behind and was driving his sword into the baby. Another Indian, with a knife, was slashing the breast of the woman and, in the picture, it looked like the woman was still alive.

I was looking at this picture, almost in a stunned trance, when the Sister came and sat by me. She was one of the founders of the school and she said to me, "You know, I'm always catching you reading. What is it you are reading about?"

I said, "I understand that we have history next year so I am trying to get ahead of it."

She said, "Well, exactly what is it you are reading?"

"Well, I'm reading about these Indians that attacked these colonists and the pictures are just awful. They're terrible. I can't imagine that anyone would do something like this!"

She said to me, "You know, Rosemary, that you are an Indian."

But that wasn't bad enough because she added to it, "You are all Indians and we are civilizing you. The Sisters are trying to civilize you so you won't do these things."

And I could only picture my grandmother and grandfather, so loving and greeting people, white people too, at their lodge, all people coming into the house and being offered food and coffee and tea, always giving whatever they had. They were quiet and loving and lovable.

I could see all this and the way they were and then I would look at the

pciture. And I threw that book as hard as I could across the room and I ran from school.

Well, there was a fence around the school and trees behind it. I went behind the trees to hide - to hide because I was Indian. I hid because I wanted to hide from the fact that I was an Indian - I was a torturer. My mind would see the picture and I would cry, "Oh no! Oh no!"

I got myself sick and landed in the infirmary that time. I stayed there for four days without eating and drinking. Finally, Father Aloyisius, an Ojibwe priest, came to talk to me. I told him what happened. He felt kind of bad and said, "Don't worry about that. It's not important what you are. It's important who you are."

When I got back home I showed by grandfather that book and said, "I'm not going back to that school because at school they teach us that we're Indian and that we're different and they picture us like this! I'm not going back to a place where they teach nothing but mean things about us!"

And he told me, he said, "My girl, you don't want to fear what they teach you. There is much about us and the world they do not know. You don't need to learn <u>what</u> they teach you. It's <u>how</u> they teach you that you are to learn. Learn the tools they use."

"The print is what makes the words. You learn that. You learn all these words and how they can twist them around to lie and to say anything they want. The words. That's what you are going to school to learn. For someday, you will use this very print, these very tools, to tell the truth."

1. Rose was learning to read and write. She was learning to compute and was learning American history. Was her right to an education, therefore, being fulfilled/guaranteed? Why or why not? _____

_____

_____

_____

2. In what way(s) did Rose's grandfather expect Rose to use her literacy to contribute to her community? _____

How do his expectations differ from those of the school in which Rose was being "educated"? _____

3. What other peoples in the United States are likely to have experienced similar contradictions in their education? Are some groups still experiencing such contradictions? _____

4. Where in the world, and in what situations, might people today be learning information from a perspective at odds with their own? ____

5. In Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, the 1990's have brought the establishment of public schools with Afrocentric and Native American curriculum focuses. The Afrocentric program is an extended day program. The Native American program integrated Native American history and values throughout the school day. What do you think is behind the community demand for such programs and what is your opinion of these options? _____

Are such programs, in your opinion, in conflict with Brown vs. the Board of Education? Carefully explain your thinking. _____

Teacher Resource #5

Question Strategy for Slavery/Gender

1. Recall experience of slaves in United States from 1600's until Emancipation in 1863:
   - •reading/education - how much; what kind?
     - slaves response to learning
     - why were first abolitionists preachers?
   - •why did owners fear the blacks who could read?
     -wider horizons, dreams
     -freedom leads to power. Slaves able to read the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Bible, would no longer accept subjugation.
   - •restrictions did not end with Emancipation. In the 1940's, African-Americans in schools in the southern states went to school three months of a year; European Americans went seven.
   - •share a story/folk tale/excerpts from a book you recall that gave you a wider horizon; freedom and power. Have students share titles that have done the same for them.

2. Recall Brown vs Board of Education decision, 1954:
   - •Why did Supreme Court consider "separate but equal" schools unconstitutional?
   - •How did this help young people "to function more effectively in community; use skills toward his/her own or community development"? Brown vs. Board of Education led to many and positive changes in education. Supporters of integration believed that the positive educational conditions in "white" schools, when extended to people of color, would remedy the inequality of the two systems. While equalizing and improving many things, in light of Rose Barstowe's experience with a traditional curriculum in a Minnesota school, what problems could still exist in an integrated school that could detract from persons of color learning amounts equal to European Americans? Do any of these problems still exist today? (Afrocentric and Native American focused educational programs are a response to this; the Jewish community has dealt with this through Hebrew school and other alternative education programs; etc.)
3. Imagine that you are told you cannot go to school any longer. What

would be the positives and negatives of this "ruling"?

Share with the class that there was a time, almost 150 years ago, when young girls were told they could not go to school with young boys. The reasons given:

- •Female brains were smaller and incapable of absorbing a great deal of information.
- •Females need to learn to sew and cook so they can be good wives and mothers some day. Home is the best place to learn these skills. Their own mothers are the best teachers.
- •The world outside the home, that men dealt with, was too dangerous, vulgar and frightening for women in which to participate.
- •Females were to be special, cared-for, kept protected from the world that learning would expose them to.

-How are these arguments similar/different to the arguments given for not allowing slaves to read? Are there similarities in the reasons for denying rights to slaves and those for denying rights to women? Do people still believe these ideas about females today? What affect, today, do these ideas have on women's rights to development? (Women still earn 60% of what men earn for equal work. Still discrimination in some fields - science, math, upper managment in business, number of women in local, state, and national governments.)

Handout # 6

Independent Literacy Project

Name(s): _____

Project title: _____

Your "Literacy Promotion Goal": _____

_____

_____

Description of project: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Literacy skills you will use in your project: _____

_____

_____

_____

How and with what groups you will share you project: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Timeline for project components and project completion: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Handout #1

What is the United Nations?

The United Nations is the international organization of States (countries) founded after the Second World War for the purposes of preventing war, maintaining international peace and security, and promoting social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom, developing friendly relations among nations and achieving international cooperation. The Member States are bound together by their adherence to the United Nations Charter and its principles. The U.N. began its work in 1945 with only 51 members. Today, there are over 165.

The United Nations is **not** a super-state or a world government. It has no powers that are not given to it by its Member States. It can only act when they decide it should. The members choose whether or not to use the U.N.'s procedures, carry out its decisions, even whether or not to observe the provisions of the Charter they have sworn to uphold.

The United Nations proper is composed of six principle organs:

The **General Assembly** is the main deliberative organ. It is comprised of representatives of all Member States, each of which has one vote. Decisions on important questions, such as recommendations on peace and security, admission of new members and budgetary matters, requires a two-thirds majority. Decisions on other questions are reached by a simple majority.

The **Security Council** has primary responsibility, under the Charter, for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council has fifteen members: five permanent members -- **China, France, Russia (formerly the USSR), the United Kingdom, and the United States** -- and 10 elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms. Each member of the Council has one vote. Decisions on procedural matters are made by an affirmative vote of at least nine of the 15 members. Decisions on substantive matters require nine votes including the concurring votes of all five permanent members. This is the rule of the "great Power unanimity" often referred to as the "veto" power. If a permanent member does not support a decision but does not wish to block it through a veto, it may abstain. Under the Charter, all Member States of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. While other organs of the U.N. make recommendations to governments, the Council alone has the power to take decisions which members are obligated to carry out.

The **Economic and Social Council** was established by the Charter as the principal organ to coordinate the economic and social work of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and institutions. The Council has 54 members who serve for three years. Eighteen members are elected each year for a three-year term to replace 18 members whose term has expired. Voting in the Council is by simple majority; each member has one vote.

In setting up an International Trusteeship System, the Charter established the **Trusteeship Council** as one of the main organs of the United Nations and assigned to it the task of supervising the administration of "trust territories" placed under the Trusteeship System. Major goals of the System was to promote the advancement of the inhabitants of Trust Territories and their progressive development toward self-government or independence. The aims of the Trusteeship System have been fulfilled with all of the territories attaining independence, either as separate countries or by joining neighboring independent nations.

The **International Court of Justice** is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. Its Statute is an integral part of the United Nations Charter. All countries which are parties to the Statute of the Court (which automatically includes all U.N. Member States) can be parties to cases before it. Other countries can refer cases to it under conditions laid down by the Security Council. In addition, the Security Council may recommend that a legal dispute be referred to the Court. Both the General Assembly and the Security Council can ask the Court for an advisory opinion on any legal question. The Court consists of 15 Judges elected by the General Assembly and the Security Council, voting independently. They are chosen on the basis of their qualifications, not on the basis of nationality, and care is taken to ensure that the principal legal systems of the world are represented in the Court. No two Judges can be nationals of the same country. The Judges serve for a term of nine years and may be re-elected. They cannot engage in any other occupation during their term of office.

The **Secretariat** services the other organs of the United Nations and administers the programs and policies laid down by them. At its head is the **Secretary-General**, who is appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council. The work of the Secretariat is as varied as the list of problems dealt with by the United Nations. It includes: administering peace-keeping operations; organizing international conferences on problems of world-wide concern; surveying world economic trends and problems; preparing studies on such subjects as human rights, disarmament and development; and interpreting speeches, translating documents and supplying the world's communications media with information about the United Nations.

Sources: *Image and Reality (United Nations)*
Basic Facts About the United Nations (United Nations)

Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations

We, the peoples of the the United Nations, Determined to save succeeding generations from the scource of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligation arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

And For These Ends to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors, and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed forces shall not be used, save in the common interest, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,

Have Resolved to Combine Our Efforts to Accomplish These Aims. Have Accordingly, our respective governments, through representatives assembled in the city of San Francisco, who have exhibited their full powers found to be in good and due form, have agreed to the present Charter of the United Nations and do hereby establish an international organization to be known as the United Nations.

Additional Resources

1. **Development Forum**- A periodical, in newspaper format, that covers economic and social development issues facing the world community; **Contact**: PO Box 5850, GCCPO, New York, NY, 10017.

2. **International Development in a Global Contest**-A teaching module that guides students through an inquiry strategy that will help them see the developing world, and groups within the US experiencing development problems, through the eyes and experience of that population. **Contact**: United Nations Asociation of Minnesota, Mary Eileen Sorenson, 1929 S. 5th St, Minneapolis, MN 55454, 612-333 -2824.

3. **International Literacy Year (1990)**- Information and resource materials from the perspective of the world community; **Contact**: United Nations Association-USA, 485 Fifth Ave, New York, NY, 10017-6104, 212-697-3232.

4. **Reading is Fundamental**- An organization whose purpose is to help young people discover the joy of reading; booklets, parent guides, posters, workshops and publications; **Contact**: RIF Publications, 600 Maryland Ave SW, Suite 55, Washington, DC, 20024-2520, 202-287-3220.

5. **Sow the Seeds of Knowledge**-School curricula to help celebrate global literacy following the UN International Year of Literacy; four different curricula with cassette tapes (grades k-2, 3-6,7-9, 10-12) by Stan Smith; **Contact**: Martin Peace Institute, University Of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho, 83843.

6. **UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)**- The world's largest channel (in over 150 countries) for multilateral technical and and pre-investment cooperation; co-sponsors the annual UNA-USA national essay; **Contact**: UNDP, One UN Plaza, New York, NY, 10017.

7. **UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization)**- An intergovernmental specialized agency (1946) of the United Nations that reports annually to the UN Economic and Social Council; its primary aim is to promote collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and education; **Contact**: UNESCO, 7, Place de Fontenoy, 75007 Paris, France.

8. **UNESCO Courier**- UNESCO monthly paper covering cultural, educational and scientific topics; **Contact**: UNIPUB, 10033-F King Highway, Lanham, MD, 20706 -4391.

9. **World Development**- UN Development Programme monthly periodical covering educational, vocational, religious and social issues; UNDP, Division of Information, One UN Plaza, New York, NY, 10017.

General Resources

1. Institute for International Education
809 UN Plaza
New York, NY 10017
Fullbright Scholarships; international teacher exchanges and education.

2. UNICEF Classroom Materials, Films, Videos
333 East 38th St
New York, NY 10016
212-686-5522

3. UNESCO
7, Place de Fontenoy
75700 Paris, France
Free magazine, UNESCO Sources, contains short articles on education, science and culture.

4. UNESCO Films (catalogue)
UNESCO Liaison Office
2 United Nations Plaza Suite 900
New York, NY 10017

5. UN Film and Video Catalogue
UN Radio and Visual Service, Department of Public Information, Rm S-845
United Nations, New York, NY 10017
212-963-6939

6. UNIPUB
10033-F King Highway
Lanham, MD 20706-4391
MD: 301-419-7666; US: 800-233-0506
Distributes publications from FAO, GATT, IAEA, ILO, IMO, UN, UNESCO, UNITAR, UNU, WIPO and other international sources. Free catalogue.

7. United Nations Association of the USA (UNA/USA)
485 Fifth Ave
New York, NY 10017
212-697-3232
Membership for those wanting to folow international issues and work of the UN. Interdependent newsletter, numerous publications.

8. United Nations Bookshop
Room GA-32
New York, NY 10017

212-963-7680; 800-553-3210

9. United Nations Sales Section
Room DC2-853, Dept 701
New York, NY 10017
212-963-8302
Free catalogue of UN publications.

10. Women in Film (Catalogue)
UN Non-Government Liaison Service
DC-2-1116
United Nations, New York, NY 10017

11. The World Bank
Schools Program
Publications Department
1818 H Street NW
Washington, DC 20433
202-473-7529
Classroom ready booklets, slides on world development issues. Data on diskettes.

Evaluation

Your brief evaluation of this curriculum would be greatly appreciated by its authors and publisher. Please send your comments to the address below.

Title of curriculum used: _____
Number of students taught: _____
Grade level: _____ Course title used in: _____
How used (eg supplemental, with Model U.N., etc.): _____
_____
_____

Student comments: (If more space is needed, please attach.) _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Teacher comments: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Strengths/weaknesses of the curriculum: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Suggestions for improvement: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Other topics and issues for which you would like to see teaching aids developed: _____
_____

Suggested format for these teaching aids (eg video, software, etc.): ___
_____
_____

Materials you have used to teach about that United Nations that you would recommend: _____

_____

_____

Your name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Please send *Evaluation* to:

Mary Eileen Sorenson
UNA-MN
1929 South 5th Street
Mpls, MN 55454
(612) 333-2824